

HOUSE No. 2727

By Mr. Frost of Auburn, petition of Paul K. Frost for legislation to establish a grant program within the Department of Public Health for medical students enlisting to provide services to uninsured and low income patients. Public Health.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Five.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO CREATING A GRANT PROGRAM FOR MEDICAL STUDENTS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 Chapter 15A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2000
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding after section 19A
3 the following section:—

4 Section 19B. There shall be a grant program for the purpose of
5 encouraging outstanding students to enlist in the doctor and
6 nursing facilities that service uninsured and low-income patients
7 in the commonwealth by providing financial assistance for stu-
8 dents enrolled in any qualified education program that is neces-
9 sary to obtain a medical license, as defined below. The program
10 shall be administered by the department of public health in accor-
11 dance with guidelines promulgated by the department of public
12 health. The program shall be subject to appropriation.

13 The term “qualified education program” shall mean any pro-
14 gram at an accredited educational facility that must be completed
15 in order to obtain a degree in the medical field, or to obtain a
16 medical practitioner’s license.

17 The council shall promulgate guidelines governing the grant
18 program for doctors and nurses. These guidelines shall include the
19 following provisions:

20 (1) Eligibility for the program shall be limited to persons who
21 have graduated in the top 15 per cent of their undergraduate
22 classes or who have graduated with honors designations, as certi-
23 fied by the institution attended by any such applicant;

24 (2) Eligibility shall be limited to persons entering the doctor or
25 nursing education program after July 1, 2005 who have signed a
26 contract stating that they will work in a health clinic, established
27 doctor's office or medical facility that treats patients who are
28 uninsured, or low-income, while they are attending school. These
29 specific facilities will be deemed by the Public Health department;

30 (3) The commonwealth shall pay a participating doctor's or
31 nurse's costs incurred in being enrolled in a qualified education
32 program at a rate not to exceed \$150.00 per month for a period not
33 to exceed 48 months;

34 (4) Repayment shall be made to the participating doctor or
35 nurse annually upon the presentation by the participating doctor or
36 nurse of satisfactory evidence of enrollment in qualified education
37 program, as well as satisfactory service to the commonwealth
38 through medical facilities that treat low-income or uninsured
39 patients;

40 (5) Payments by the commonwealth shall cover only costs
41 made by the participating nurse or doctor in the months during
42 which the participating nurse or doctor is actively enrolled in the
43 education program in the commonwealth, and working with a des-
44 ignated medical facility;

45 (6) The program will be limited to doctors and nurses who sign
46 a contract to practice in health care facilities designated by the
47 department of public health as caring for low-income or uninsured
48 patients.

49 Expenses for administration of the program may be retained in
50 an interest bearing trust fund to be established by the department
51 of public health and expended for the costs of administering the
52 program without further appropriation, and any funds remaining
53 in the trust at the termination of the program shall be returned of
54 the General Fund.